

**ABSTRACT:**

The tubular banding applicator converts a flat tubular material into a cut length expanded tubular sleeve and mounts the sleeve circumferentially on a container. A driver moves a selected length of flat tubular material from a supply station, around a spreader, and into a hollow former having a retaining gate at an exit thereof. A cutter severs the selected length of tubular material from the supply station and a flow of air directed at a side of the flat tubular length assists in opening the sleeve. A conveyor carries a series of containers along a path to position each container in turn in alignment with the opened tubular sleeve. The driver moves a second selected length of flat tubular material from the supply into the former, thereby ejecting the first open sleeve from the former onto a container aligned below. The sleeve is subsequently caused to shrink to securely enwrap the container. The cut length may be either short in comparison to the height of the container and applied as a band between the container neck and a closure, or longer and applied to cover all or a portion of the container body.